

A Post of Honor for the Crow.

THE crow family is placed by ornithologists at the head of the bird world. Linnaeus gave the post of honor to the eagles, because of their kingly quality of rapacity, but Professors Parker and Newton assign the highest place to the Corvidae, on account of their "wit and wisdom" and their possession of larger brains in proportion to the weight of the body than those of any other birds.

The Fatal Ring

A SERIAL OF ROMANCE AND MYSTERY

"The Spider" Undertakes to Set
Carslake Free and Pearl Has
a Gleam of Real Hope

Who's Who in the Thrilling New Film
Pearl Standish PEARL WHITE
Richard Carslake Warner Oland
The High Priestess Ruby Hoffman
Nicholas Knox Earle Foxe
Tom Carleton Henry Gsell

(Novelling from the photo-play "The Fatal Ring.")

By Fred Jackson.

Episode 7.

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THE "Spider" reached for the money with his sinuous, clutching fingers and silently counted it; then he looked at Pearl.

"It is the exact amount, all right," he said. "In heaven's name, where did you get it?"

Pearl smiled.

"Never mind; I got it," she answered.

To this the "Spider" made no reply. With a grin, he rose, extinguished the lights, picked up a lantern and moved into the dormer window. There he slowly began to wave the lighted lantern—up and down—up and down!

From a cellar-way, far below and some distance away, another lantern answered him.

Waving his own signals a second time the "Spider" turned to Pearl. "In fifteen minutes now," he said, "Carslake will be free!"

Following the waving of the lantern a strange series of happenings occurred inside the prison where Carslake was confined.

Carslake Escapes.

In a darkened corridor one pair of hands groping aimlessly found a second pair of hands, also groping, and thrust a wad of bills into them. Above, one light, while a guard sat staring dreamily before him into space, a blanket came flying through the air and enveloped him, and before he could extricate himself or draw his gun, two men leaped upon him and beat him into insensibility. And no sound was made.

Further along this same corridor a second guard sat eating his evening meal. A man came shuffling by with a bottle of milk in his hand, and he offered to share it. "Have some!" he asked, generously.

"Don't care if I do. It'll wash down my grub," said the guard, amicably.

He held out his glass, and when it had been filled to the brim, drank the whole of it. The man with the milk bottle still in his hand smiled cordially as he looked on.

And now—if one had listened carefully—one might have heard bolts drawn. If one had been on watch one might have seen Cars-

lake slip out along the corridor and down into the night.

One man conducted him; a second was on guard outside. Both hurried with him to the curb, piled into the car that drew up for them, and vanished into the night.

Carslake was for making tracks instantly for certain regions in another part of the city where he knew he would be safe from further police search, but the men with him had orders to deliver him to the "Spider," and they would listen to no other plan.

Accordingly, as Pearl's patience was just about nearing its end, the door suddenly burst open and Carslake appeared, immaculate and smiling as ever.

"Good evening," he said with a pleasant little bow. Instantly Pearl rushed toward him.

"The violet diamond—quick! where is it?" she urged eagerly.

A Little Surprise.

Carslake's smile broadened. "My Dear Girl," he protested, "you really didn't think I'd give you the diamond, did you?"

Pearl gasped. She was overwhelmed by this turn of affairs. "But—of course, I bought your freedom. I—I paid the 'Spider' fifty thousand dollars," she declared.

The "Spider" nodded quietly. "Quite true. So she did," he admitted, and, turning to Pearl, he added, "And I'm very curious to know where you got it."

Carslake turned to the "Spider" nonchalantly.

"Out of the bank, most likely," he said. "This young lady is Pearl Standish, the richest girl in America. Her—er—ransom—ought to be worth five times fifty thousand dollars."

The "Spider" and his men gazed with awe and amazement upon Pearl at this, and Pearl returned their glances with an expression of alarm.

"The 'Spider' was first to recover from his surprise.

"So your idea was to trick Miss Standish?" he said. "You had no intention of living up to your promise to her?"

"My promise meant nothing. I mean to hold her for ransom, of course," replied Carslake. "The girl is worth one hundred million dollars."

The "Spider" scrutinized him as though he were some new type of reptile.

An Ultimatum.

"There is honor even among thieves," said the "Spider." Then speaking with cutting calmness: "In my neighborhood we keep our bargains and live up to our compact among ourselves."

"But this girl isn't one of us and she doesn't belong in our neighborhood," answered Carslake. "I'm not going to give her the violet diamond, and that's final."

He turned to go. Pearl uttered a cry of protest and gazed at the "Spider" appealingly. The "Spider" turned to his men.

"Stop him!" he said.

Instantly they advanced to block Carslake's way. Outnumbered, he had no choice but to yield gracefully. He turned back to face the "Spider."

"You will bring the violet diamond to this room within the hour, or you will lose your taste for diamonds or for anything else," said the "Spider."

His sharp eyes glittered as they rested upon Carslake. Carslake shrugged.

"Very well. I'll go out and get it," he said.

"My men will accompany you," said the "Spider." "And I advise you to hurry!"

Carslake turned on his heel and vanished, followed by the men with whom he had come.

There followed another tiresome wait. Pearl paced the floor. The "Spider" sat quietly behind his table, studying her with speculative eyes.

Do You Like a Thrilling Story? Read "The Fatal Ring"



The Prettiest Flag!



THIS little story is honest and true. I'm telling you that because sometimes I do not tell facts. But I always tell you Truths—or try. This is honest and true. The baby face in this picture is not just anybody's or somebody's baby face, somewhere in the world. It is a real baby face of a baby I know. He lives next door to me. He has soft brown eyes and a peachy red in his round hard cheeks, and his picture-book-baby hair is yellow—no, not yellow, but amber-gold like honey—and it curls against his little stem of a neck and blows in the wind when he runs.

After all, that might be just "somebody's baby," maybe yours, hm? He puts a fat knee against my green fence and presses a warm

face against the green slats of my green fence—nose and flower-mouth and one soft eye shows through—and he says in a fascinating call, "Hello—Nay-uh! SOME day I'm coming over to dinner!" And just about then, in this embarrassing, weighty minute of silence full of that "SOME," his little round hat tips back and off, and he stoops flatly with his ambery hair turned over his face to get it—and then I have invited him THIS day, and he has gracefully accepted—and down to make entry through the gate.

So this small, sweet person sat one day on a deep couch with a book of flags, the bright garden of gaily colored "Flags of all nations," turning the pages with a fat soft finger, and poring and saying nothing. He is too little to know "My Country 'tis of Thee." He does hardly know he has one, save in a dim baby way.

He has seen the soft flag of our country broken out from his own house to the west wind's singing breath. But he is so tiny that folks have not just got around to such heartsome things as "your Country and your Flag, my son!" And poring, and saying nothing, he ran the bright gamut of beautiful flags—of stars and blue and crimson, of yellow like gold, of dragons, of moons on bloody ground, of silvery white and black. And at last the fat finger preening heavily and warmly, stopped on the flag of crimson and white bars, with its field of star-silvered blue; he looked up into a face that bent over him, looked through the gold mist of his curls, and he said in a voice as sweet as a lollipop in the sun, "The-PR-ET-TI-EST Flag!"

So it is the prettiest flag. Oh, we knew it all the time—just!—Nell Brinkley.

ADVICE TO THE LOVELORN

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX

Too Little Heart.

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

I am nineteen and have been going about with a young man for two years. A year and a half ago I discontinued going about with him, thinking I would meet some one that I would like better. I have never met any one since. I am now a very lonely person. I am sure you will be able to help me. I am sure you will be able to help me.

What a cold-blooded performance yours was! Giving up the man because you felt you didn't care for him and might meet some one else for whom you would care perfectly all right—honest and square. But not giving him the explanation that was his due was very high-handed. I think that he may be generous enough to forgive you if you have the good fortune still to appeal to him. The only thing you can do now is to humble yourself completely—tell him exactly how matters stand—what your feelings were, what they are now and of your desire for "another chance." You may get it and you may not. But it is up to you to be a "good sport" about it.

Writing to Strangers.

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

Some time ago I advertised for a situation. I received a letter from a young man, who wrote that he was a soldier in the U. S. Army, and as he was lonely, he had availed himself of the opportunity of writing to someone, and asked me to correspond with him. I thought he had taken a great liberty, and answered telling him harshly what I thought of him. I was only sixteen and would like to know whether I did the proper thing.

Of course what you did was right.

Perhaps the man who answered your letter was a lonely soldier boy seeking for friendship, but even then he had no right to take advantage of a girl's efforts to secure employment. But there is plenty of likelihood that the person who wrote was one of those dangerous individuals who seek everywhere for weak-minded girls who are ready to leap into the midst of adventures which may end tragically.

HICTANER "The Man Fish"

By Jean de la Hire

A Strange Story of Mystery and Fanaticism

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

"I was Antil who appeared. As he entered he passed a button, and the room was brightly lighted. Then the man seated himself at the table. Worked the lever of the transmitter and said: "All right; Antil is here." "A moment's silence passed. There was a second ring, and from the phonographic receiver came these words: Order from the master to Antil: "Take the electric launch and bring Moissette to the Lost Isle at full speed. "If Hictaner goes to the Cabrera station, hide everything from him concerning Moissette's deliverance and transfer, and all facts relating to her. Hictaner is encountered during the voyage do not let him know that she is aboard. Antil had lied. "Antil had lied to me. He knew Hictaner. "If they took me from Severac, then was not to give me to Hictaner. Then why was it? Why did they try to take my beloved from me and to leave him ignorant of my safety? "A moment's silence passed. 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